

1.40 Public Participation

Any person wishing to attend meetings of the Owasso Public Schools Board of Education in the capacity of an observer is entitled to do so and is welcomed by the Board of Education. The Board of Education or the superintendent may invite members of the public to speak at regular Board meetings or special Board meetings called for specific purposes.

Organizations, groups and individuals may request to speak to the Board during the public comment segment scheduled for all Board meetings. A request to address the Board on any agenda item for the scheduled meeting may be made. Such request must be made by the person wanting to address the Board on any agenda item for the scheduled meeting by signing their name and number of the agenda item to be discussed/addressed at least ten (10) minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting on the sign-in sheet provided at each regular Board meeting.

A request to address the Board on any non-agenda item must be received by the board minutes clerk in writing seven (7) calendar days prior to the Board's next regular meeting date. Topics for discussion must be specific in nature, as required by law for school board meetings. The board minutes clerk will contact citizens if the topic must be worded more specifically.

Each individual has one opportunity to comment, not to exceed 5 minutes. The total time allotted to public comment at Board meetings will not exceed thirty (30) minutes. Citizen comments will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Public comment is not required under the Open Meetings Act and is only permitted when it is appropriately listed as a board meeting agenda item. Because the Board can only take official action on items posted on the agenda per state law and when the specific agenda item is called, Board members will not respond to public comment and/or answer questions posed during public comment. The Board may also limit the number of speakers at any meeting.

No person who has publicly announced or filed as a candidate for public office may use the public comment portion of the Board meeting as a forum for campaigning. No persons representing a vendor may use the public comment portion of the Board meeting for the solicitation of a product or service.

School Board policies, state and federal law have established separate and distinct procedures and forums for the resolution of employee grievances, employee complaints, employee suspensions and terminations, and complaints against individual employees, pupil suspensions and appeals and litigation. To avoid circumvention of those separate proceedings and to assure fairness to all parties concerned, no person will be allowed to speak regarding the following:

- A. An issue in a pending lawsuit, complaint or investigation filed with an outside agency, in which the School District, its employee(s) or the Board of Education is a party;

- B. A pending grievance;
- C. A pending employee complaint filed with the School District or an outside agency;
- D. A complaint against individual employee(s);
- E. Employee disciplinary action, suspension or termination; or
- F. A pending student suspension or appeal that may reach the Board of Education.

The Board of Education will not hear from any School District employee who has not taken his or her employment-related concern through the appropriate chain of command in an effort to resolve the matter at the lowest possible level. Employees are required to take their concerns to their immediate supervisor, the building principal, the Superintendent and only then to the Board of Education.